



March, 2006

Volume 4, Issue 1

NEWS FROM THE 42ND DISTRICT

Assemblyman's Message

Welcome to the Winter 2006 edition of "News from the 42nd District." My electronic newsletter, designed to keep you informed of happenings in the State Capitol and the 42nd District.

This issue will update you on environmental legislation this year and other community and legislative activities.

I also want to thank all of you who let me know how you felt on important state issues by completing and returning the legislative update and questionnaire I mailed out in January.

I mailed the questionnaire to all registered voters in my district and have so far received 3,500 completed feedback forms. By my next newsletter, I should be able to let you know of the results of this survey.

I hope you enjoy reading the newsletter and find the information useful.

Paul

Community Calendar

[March, 2006](#)

[April, 2006](#)

[May, 2006](#)

BREAKING NEWS: UC Regents Unanimously Vote to Divest from Sudan

At their March 2006 Meeting at UCLA, Assemblyman Paul Koretz called upon the University of California (UC) Regents to divest from all Sudanese holdings of select companies in Sudan that appear to significantly contribute to Sudan's military capacities. Since 2003, an estimated 400,000 Darfurians have

been killed and over 2.5 million have been displaced. Despite the scale of genocide, the international community continues to stand by, virtually inactive. It's because of student activism that we've come this far, as students have been leading this charge across the country, from Harvard and Yale to the University of California.

"Divestment can be used to force corporations to pull out of Sudan or put economic pressure on the government to halt the genocide in Darfur," stated Koretz. "The University of California is in a unique position to use the sharpest economic tool it has available for



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HUNDREDS ATTEND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS FORUM HOSTED BY ASSEMBLYMAN PAUL KORETZ

Public health and safety have always been high on the list of Assemblyman Koretz's priorities. In response to the death, devastation and displacement we all saw on television from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, combined with the inevitability of fires and earthquakes in our region, Koretz wanted to do something more than just introduce legislation. He decided to provide a service to raise people's awareness of safety and preparedness in emergency situations.

On November 30, 2006, Assemblyman Koretz sponsored an emergency preparedness forum. Approximately 300 residents from the 42nd Assembly District attended the event at Stephen S. Wise Temple, which included speakers from the State Office of Emergency Services, City of Los Angeles Office of Emergency Preparedness, Cedars Sinai Hospital, Los Angeles Fire Department, American Red Cross and the Automobile Club of Southern California (AAA). All of these organizations were on hand to help inform his constituents on how best to prepare for an emergency. Also at the event were representatives from business and organizations engaged in emergency preparedness work such as Emergencycafe.com, MyMedicalRecords.com, United Animal Nations and Hatzolah.

If you have any questions about this event or would like a packet of information from the event sent to your home, please call the district office at 310-285-5490.



Assemblyman Koretz with constituents at Forum



Emergency Preparedness Forum Attendees

TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS UPDATE

405 Repairs, other Projects in Full Swing

There is good news on the local transportation front. Below is an update on the status on several major freeway improvement projects, which when completed should provide some relief from traffic congestion in the area.

The most complex of these improvement projects, named by Caltrans as the "Gap Closure" project, recently reached its first major milestone towards its completion by mid-2007. This project, when completed, will add one additional crucial lane to the interchange from the northbound 405 to the eastbound 101 and will sport a new on-ramp to the northbound 405 that will bypass the traffic transitioning to the 101. As part of this project, Caltrans engineers re-aligned and rebuilt the Greenleaf/Sepulveda off-ramp from the northbound 405. However, this construction created a minor hurdle in that the bottom of the new ramp



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THANK YOU TO NEIGHBORS FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE

In January, the Neighbors for Peace and Justice - San Fernando Valley put together an amazing forum with environmental experts and advocates to discuss our dependency on oil. I was given the opportunity to speak about the problems associated with oil consumption. Several of the proposals I put forward, especially the need to develop alternative fuels and to allow industrial hemp to be legalized for commercial purposes were well received at the meeting. I am dedicated to following these issues throughout the year and lending my support to them wherever possible.

Battery recycling

New Hazardous Waste Rules – Increased Recycling

Have you heard? As of February 8, 2006, Californians can no longer throw our alkaline batteries into the household trash. The same goes for electronic greeting cards, fluorescent lamps or old VCRs. This month, statewide regulations went into effect after a three year grace period that was intended to give local agencies enough time to prepare alternative disposal methods for these household items, also known as “universal waste.”

In an effort to reduce hazardous household waste in our landfills and promote recycling these products, Assemblyman Koretz just introduced AB 2271, the California Household Battery Recycling Act. This legislation will make the process of recycling household batteries as easy as recycling newspapers or aluminum cans. Similar to the bottle and can recycling programs, AB 2271 will add a redemption value to all household

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ASSEMBLYMAN KORETZ OUT IN THE COMMUNITY



This past holiday season was certainly a busy one! I attended many holiday events, and I wanted to share a couple of pictures from them. Here, I'm riding with my daughter, Rachel, and wife, Gail, in the Studio City Holiday Parade which was great fun.

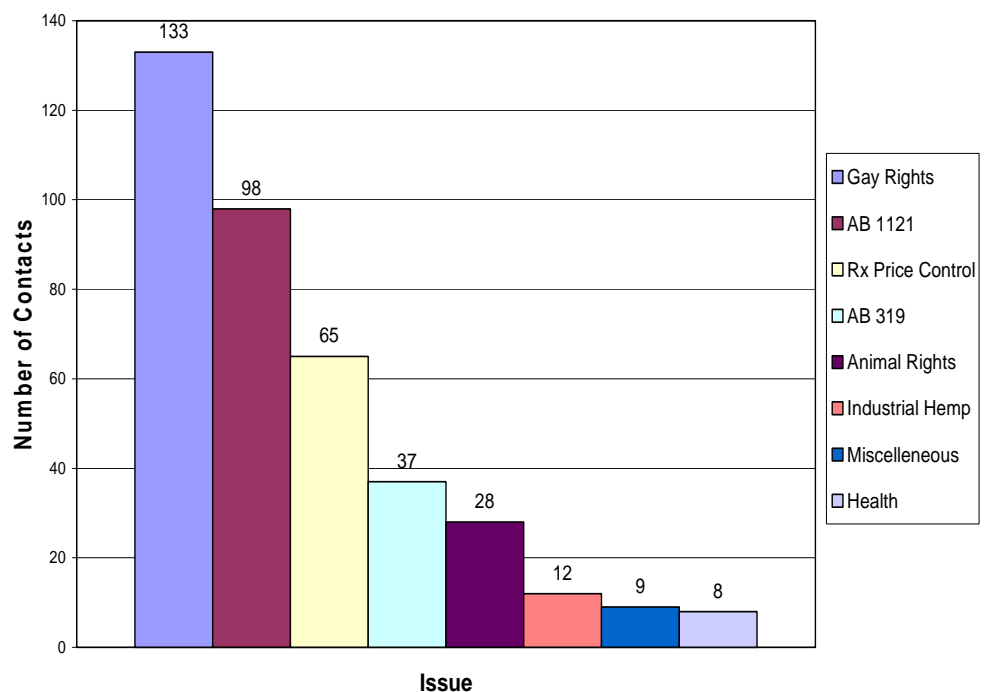


One of my favorite events was the Holiday party for our local Janitor's Union, where I was able to give away a bike to a janitor's daughter. I was delighted to be involved in these events and thank all who attended.

Issues of Concern in the 42nd Assembly District

Between January 1st and February 15th, Assemblyman Koretz's district office received 390 letters and emails on a variety of issues. One-hundred and thirty three residents expressed support for gay rights, another 98 people voiced support for AB 1121, a Koretz bill to suspend death penalty executions until a commission report is released in 2007. Sixty-five residents expressed support for a state-enacted prescription drug program. Thirty-seven people indicated their support for a bill to protect children from plastic-based toxic materials. Another 28 people wrote to support legislation to protect pets during emergency situations, 12 to support legalizing the industrial use of hemp, 9 miscellaneous and 8 for health services.

Issues in the 42nd District¹



Koretz Legislation and Community Involvement Lead to a Better California

As my legislative record has shown, environmental protection has always been one of my top priorities in Sacramento. To advise me on critical issues impacting California's environment, I created an Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC), which I meet with regularly in the district. The EAC provides input and expertise on environmental concerns, and makes suggestions on bills I should introduce to address those concerns. One of the issues the EAC raised during our December meeting was the current lack of adequate protection of bird nests in the state.

I have introduced AB 1924, which will extend protection of nests and eggs of certain endangered or threatened migratory birds to a yearly cycle instead of the current nesting cycle. This increased protection is necessary because many of the endangered migratory birds that visit California return to the same nest year after year, and removal of these nests dramatically reduces reproduction of these birds.

This legislation, which will be heard later this month in the Assembly's Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee, will also increase penalties for intentionally taking or destroying nests and eggs of these birds.

Another bill that is part of my environmental package is AB 2271--the California Household Battery Recycling Act, which will establish a refund value of ten cents for each household battery (excluding rechargeable batteries) turned in for recycling. The program, which is modeled after the state's CRV program for bottles and aluminum cans, will provide incentives to recycle batteries and help fund local government efforts to establish battery recycling programs. AB 2271 will be heard in the Assembly's Natural Resources Committee at the end of this month or the beginning of April.

Due to increased concern about litter in our waterways, I have also introduced legislation (AB 1940), which will create a state-wide marine debris task force. Comprised of high-ranking deputies and directors from the State Water Control Board, the Integrated Waste Management Board, the Coastal Commission and other agencies, this task force will actively pursue methods and tactics to reduce harmful pollutants in our rivers and oceans. This bill will also be heard in the Assembly's Natural Resources Committee in the next few weeks.

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KORETZ TO BUSH ADMINISTRATION: DON'T BALANCE BUDGET ON BACKS OF CALIFORNIA'S NATURAL RESOURCES

In February, Assemblyman Paul Koretz called on the Bush administration and Congress to abandon plans to sell California's public lands to balance the Federal budget.

This action was in response to President Bush's February 10th proposal to sell more than \$1 billion in public lands over the next decade. In California, over 85,000 acres in the Angeles, San Bernardino, Sequoia, and Sierra forests are targeted for sale, not to mention nine other regions in Northern California.

Assemblyman Koretz communicated his objections in a letter co-signed by twenty-six of his colleagues to Interior Secretary Gale Norton, pointing out how ill-advised and irresponsible it would be for the Bush Administration to shift federal land management policy and sacrifice our public park lands for private profits. This land is vital to California's identity and its economy. Our diverse park system draws tourists from all over the world who delight in its magnificence."

Mr. Koretz is committed to ensuring that this public land sale never takes place. "In my opinion, this is an underhanded attempt by the Administration to open our natural resources to developers and timber interests to cover their own budgetary ineptitude," said Koretz. "I am adamantly opposed to such a policy and vow to keep our public lands safe from development and exploitation."

If you are interested in voicing your opposition to this proposal, please go to The Wilderness Society's [website](#) to do so.

Hotel Workers Organize Around LAX

Century Boulevard, near Los Angeles International Airport, has long been thought of as the gateway to Los Angeles. Instead of being an area that reflects the best our city has to offer, it is home to low-wage jobs, strip clubs, high crime rates and adjacent communities mired in poverty. These conditions neglect the needs of tens of thousands of Angelenos, deprive the city of millions of dollars in potential tax revenue, and send the wrong message to visitors about Los Angeles.

The Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy (LAANE) reports that hotel workers in the LAX area earn far less than other hotel workers throughout LA County. Additionally, a high number of these workers live in the surrounding communities of Lennox, Inglewood and Hawthorne.

The [Coalition for a New Century](#) was created to improve conditions for workers, communities and the hotel industry alike in this vital part of L.A. The Coalition is an alliance that is vitally important to the local area, and includes community groups, clergy and UNITE-HERE Local 11, the union that represents hotel workers in Los Angeles. It recently kicked off a campaign to encourage city investment in the areas surrounding LAX. The Coalition's goals are to:

LABOR NEWS

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Koretz Legislation -- Cont'd from Previous Page

I also plan to introduce legislation to prevent environmental scofflaws from contracting with the State. There have been several recent examples where contractors have flouted federal and state environmental laws. The goal of this legislation is to identify violators at a time prior to contracting with the state and to debar such contractors for a period of three years.

Each session, I try to introduce one or more bills to protect the environment. I will continue to seek advice from the members of my EAC and my constituents. If you would like more information about my past and/or current environmental legislation, or would like to know more about my EAC, please call my district office at (310) 285-5490.

STAFF PROFILE - DAVID HERSCH

During my first year in the State Assembly, I hired David Hersch as one of my Legislative Aides. A former Los Angeles City Council staffer, David has worked for me for the last 5 years on a range of matters, including public safety, business, elections and campaign reform, housing and community development, legal, local government and transportation issues.

David grew up in the San Fernando Valley, and until 2001, was a life-long Angelino. He graduated with a political science degree from UCLA and is a graduate of Loyola Law School. David began his political career as my City Council deputy in 1990. He then went on to serve as Legislative Deputy to Los Angeles City Councilmember Mike Hernandez. After having survived working in the trenches of Los Angeles city government for 10 years, he joined my capitol staff, and is proud of the fact that he continues to work for the residents of Los Angeles.

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KORETZ SHARES HIS SUCCESSES!

At the close of each legislative session, varying public interest groups release Legislative report cards that track each legislator's votes on issues of interest to these groups. Assemblyman Koretz received a 100% score from numerous organizations during the 2005 legislative year. Mr. Koretz is especially proud of the honors he received from both Equality California and CalPIRG, two organizations with which he works closely.

Equality California, a state-wide group representing the LGBT community, tracked votes on 15 bills, including Koretz's AB 1586, the first law in the nation protecting transgender people from discrimination in health care, and his AB 228, which prohibits a healthcare plan from denying coverage for organ or tissue transplantation on the basis of a person's HIV status. Both bills were signed by the Governor. Koretz is also proud to have been a joint author of AB 849, the Religious Freedom and Civil Marriage Protection Act. Although he was extremely disappointed that AB 849 was vetoed by Governor Schwarzenegger, he is thrilled to have been part of such an historic piece of legislation. According to Koretz, "Bans on gay marriage and any other equality measures are the last frontier of bigotry and discrimination and it's time we put an end to them."

CALPIRG, the California Public Interest Research Group, has supported a number of the Assemblyman's consumer protection bills, including his AB 178, legislation that requires only self-extinguishing cigarettes be sold in California starting January 2007. According to Koretz, this bill "will greatly reduce the incidence of cigarette-related fires in the state. I am pleased to have had the strong support of CALPIRG on this consumer protection bill, and I applaud CALPIRG for the outstanding work they do on behalf of consumers."



CalPIRG representatives Emily Rusch and Steve Blackledge present Assemblyman Koretz with CalPIRG's 2005 Consumer Champion Award

Assemblyman Koretz also received perfect or near-perfect scores from **Planned Parenthood Affiliates of California** and **California NOW**, the **Congress of California Seniors**, the **California Alliance for Retired Americans**, the **Sierra Club of California**, the **California League of Conservation Voters**, **PAWS**, and the **Race and Public Policy** program of the **Applied Research Center**.

Battery Recycling ... Cont'd from Page 3

batteries, which will be refunded to a consumer when they take spent batteries to a certified battery recycler. Excess funds from this program will be used to supplement local agency efforts with their hazardous household waste management programs. Koretz's initial goal is to have at least fifty percent of household batteries diverted from landfill disposal by 2009, and at least eighty percent by 2012.

"Californians toss over 34,000 tons of batteries into landfills each year," said Koretz. This amount has grown due to our increased everyday use of electronics. On top of this, we are also seeing an enormous growth of gadgets and toys that require ordinary double A or triple A alkaline batteries, which are of particular concern to scientists and policy makers alike. These types of consumer goods contain a variety of heavy metals such as lead, mercury and cadmium, which have long been identified by scientists as health hazards, and have subsequently been deemed hazardous household waste by the Legislature.

Our landfills are overflowing with hazardous household waste, and over time these products deteriorate to form a toxic soup, the perils of which scientists are only now beginning to understand. Mercury, for instance, found in fluorescent lamps and some small electronics, can leach from our landfills into our groundwater which then contaminates not only our environment but our drinking water as well. Mercury poisoning can affect fetal development and has been linked to a variety of birth defects and long term illnesses.

California needs to become active in preventing a potential toxic cesspool from spoiling our environment. To do this, the legislature has determined that this waste should be diverted from our landfills. The items that you need to separate from your regular trash include most consumer electronic products, all household batteries, fluorescent lamps, telephones, radios and aerosol cans, including deodorant and hairspray products.

For a complete list, please visit the Department of Toxics website: www.dtsc.ca.gov/hazardouswaste/universalwaste.

But what do you do until we have a formalized recycling program? According to Koretz, "the good news is that the City of West Hollywood is already well ahead of the curve. They are directing residents to drop off their hazardous household waste at key locations around the city, including:

- City Hall @ 8300 Santa Monica Blvd
- Koontz Hardware @ 8914 Santa Monica Blvd.
- Gelson's Market @ 8330 Santa Monica Blvd.
- Wholefoods Market @ 7871 Santa Monica Blvd.

Other drop off locations include:

- California Recycles @ 1932 Cotner (2 blocks west of Sepulveda, between Olympic and Santa Monica). Their phone number is (310) 478-3001 ext 100.
- UCLA S.A.F.E. Collection Center @ 550 Charles E. Young Dr. West Los Angeles, 90095. They can be reached by calling 1-800-98-TOXIC.

"I applaud the City of West Hollywood and its proactive residents who are already recycling these materials," said Koretz. "I hope you will join me and spread the word about what is no longer trash but is in fact, recyclable."

Breaking News ... Cont'd from Page 1

influencing outcomes in Darfur, at minimal cost. The UC needs to send a clear and decisive message that the University will not passively condone genocide."

Legislative efforts have been made to address California's public pension system investments in Darfur. Last year, Assemblymember Dymally authored ACR 11 which urged CalPERS and CalSTRS to divest their interests in specified companies. Although the Resolution passed, to date, our public pension systems, which are the largest in the country, have yet to divest. In response to this, Assemblymembers Koretz and Coto introduced AB 2941 in February which would prohibit the Public Employees' Retirement System and the California State Teachers' Retirement System from investing in any company doing business with Sudan.

"I was born 10 years after the Holocaust and thought that nothing like it would ever be allowed to happen again. I'm shocked to see history repeating itself over and over and the international community not doing anything to stop it," Koretz said.

Testifying before the UC Regents to voice his support of divestment, Koretz stated, "I am very pleased that today you have the opportunity to take a stand against genocide and I ask the Regents to take the first significant step by the international community to end the genocide in Sudan."

After the Regents unanimous vote to divest, Koretz said, "The UC Regents made an important statement today that fiduciary responsibilities do not outweigh humanitarian and moral responsibility," said Koretz. "The UC system took a stand today against the genocide in Sudan and I expect this to be a template for future action in our state, country, and hopefully, the rest of the world."



Transportation Projects ... Cont'd from Page 2

emptied onto Sepulveda Boulevard with only two lanes instead of three, and only one lane allowed motorists to turn left to go toward busy Ventura Boulevard. As a result of congestion, motorists were creating their own third lane to turn right onto Sepulveda, although it was not marked. Although Caltrans has corrected the problem with new lane stripping and signage, they were not able to physically create a third lane because of safety concerns.

In other developments, the State Senate in early January approved SB 1026, legislation that will authorize the LA County MTA to build the HOV (carpool) lane for the northbound 405 freeway from National Boulevard in West LA to Ventura Boulevard. If you'll recall, Congressman Howard Berman was able to secure \$130 million in the federal budget for this project this past summer. Caltrans is preparing the required Environmental Impact Report, and the MTA is on a fast-track to commence construction prior to January 1, 2010 so as not to lose the federal funding. SB 1026 was among the first bills approved by the Senate and signed by the Governor (within days of its passage) in 2006.

Lastly, the State has finally issued the money it had previously appropriated to the City of Los Angeles, so that it could take control of Highland Avenue at Franklin Ave. In 2004, Assemblyman Koretz was asked to intervene on behalf of the City to help with this project. With the help of Councilmembers Tom LaBonge and Eric Garcetti, Koretz was successful getting legislation enacted that would allow the State to relinquish this part of the state highway system to the City of LA. This relinquishment will allow the City to move ahead with traffic calming and improvement projects to address concerns raised by the local community.

Hotel Workers ... Cont'd from Page 4

1. Improve local tourism jobs. Local hotels must remain neutral and respectful of workers' decision to organize a union in order for the 3,500 hotel workers to improve their wages and health insurance. Better hotel jobs will alleviate poverty in the surrounding neighborhoods;

2. Provide a community voice in future development on Century Boulevard. Local residents, who already suffer the noise and pollution impacts of nearby LAX, should have a say in the future of their neighborhoods; and,

3. Advocate for a conference center and other business improvements and job opportunities. The city has spent billions upgrading tourism infrastructure—from the airport to downtown to Hollywood and Century City. Now it's time to invest in the gateway to Los Angeles.

To learn more about the Coalition, their campaign, or to get involved, call Derek Smith at (213) 977- 9400, Ext. 111. You can also visit their website at <http://www.newcenturycoalition.org>.

Staff Profile ... Cont'd from Page 5

David has worked on some of my most critical public safety legislation, including AB 1121 which called for a moratorium on the death penalty and AB 851, which would ensure that the state recognizes as "factually innocent" anyone who has been wrongly convicted of a crime they didn't commit, provide them with a more expedited process to receive compensation for the time they spent in prison, and expunge their records.

I've known David for a number of years, and I know from personal experience that he feels that there is nothing that beats public service. While at Los Angeles City Hall, his boss and colleagues had affectionately referred to David as "The Bulldog" for the manner and voracity in which he attacked his legislative duties. To this day, and now as my Senior Assistant, David brings to his job these same "bulldog" characteristics. It was because of his work ethic, his drive and his motivation, that I first hired him, and I am glad that he agreed to come on board.

Assemblyman Paul Koretz 42nd District

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